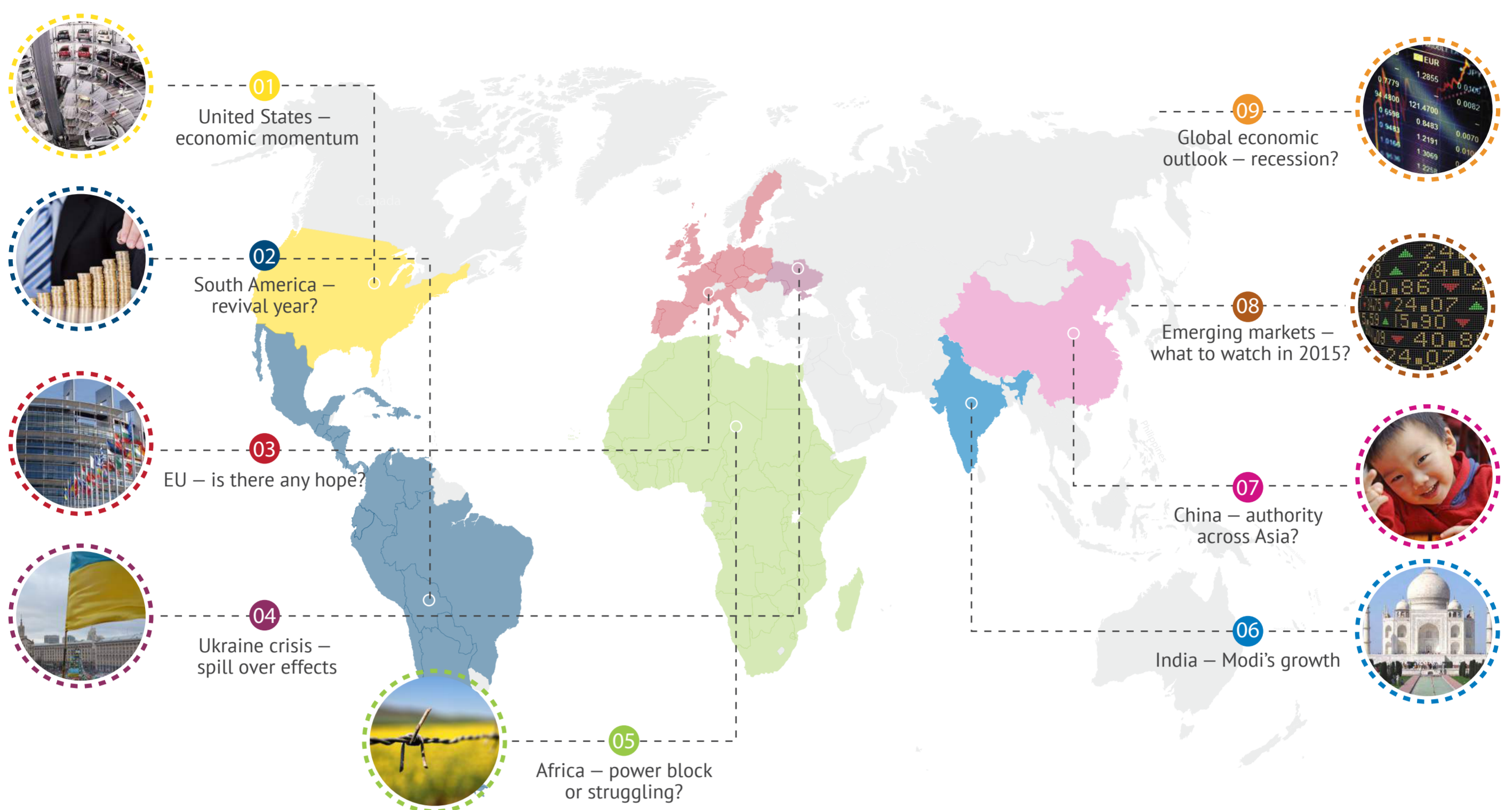


State of the World 2015

The 'State of the World 2015' report, jointly prepared by the Arab Strategy Forum and Thomson Reuters, offers predictions of the state of the world and the Arab region in 2015 through studies, analyses, and comprehensive data. The report contains possible scenarios for the region and the world in 2015. It also highlights prominent personalities that are poised to play a major role in shaping the imminent scenarios and their outcomes. The launch of the report coincided with the seven session of the Arab Strategy Forum on 14 December that was attended by thought leaders, government heads, entrepreneurs, industry experts, and media representatives.



The Top 9 Possible Scenarios in the World in 2015

01 United States – economic momentum
Jitters from recessions abroad to Ebola and other external factors may dampen America's recovery. But booming energy, low unemployment and stable housing can keep things on track. Add greater regulatory certainty, and even higher interest rates may be more breeze than headwind.

02 Latin America – revival year?
For four years, the region has mostly lagged world economic growth. The IMF predicts another year of the same. While Pacific-oriented countries will shine, Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela will suffer. With a couple of exceptions, misguided policies are coming home to roost.

03 EU – is there any hope?
A prolonged economic slump highlights Europe's core problem: a crisis in the French-German partnership. Populist parties are rising and the UK could leave the EU. Although many countries still want to join, it's up to Paris and Berlin to make the case for a rejuvenated Europe.

04 Ukraine crisis – spill over effects
Markets are worried about Europe's economy in 2014. They will worry about Europe's security in 2015. Russian and EU sanctions around Ukraine will hang over both sides' economies. A lot depends on Vladimir Putin, but Europeans need to define what they want sanctions to achieve.

05 Africa – power block or struggling?
Rapid African growth is likely to continue next year. But too much spending and borrowing has led many countries into trade deficits. As lenders become more discriminating, the state of the balance of payments, along with freedom from Ebola, will become keys to continued growth.

06 India – Modi's growth
The country's decade-long obsession with GDP expansion has proved costly. It stoked inflation and damaged balanced sheets due to a lack of effort to boost production. By contrast, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reforms promise a slow build-up to a more enduring increase in output.

07 China – authority across Asia?
Foreign investors hope for a more open, balanced China. Its leaders have other ideas. They favour reforms that minimise financial instability, punish bad eggs, President Xi Jinping's popularity quest will raise tensions with the rest of the world.

08 Emerging markets – what to watch in 2015?
Developing nations tend to get into trouble after seven fat years. By that yardstick, a meltdown is due. If rising U.S. interest rates help trigger a crisis, investors will look for relatively safe economies. Hungary, Mexico and the Philippines are the most attractive shelters.

09 Global economic outlook – recession?
Since 2009, each new calendar year has brought declarations of the end of the crisis and predictions of an economic upswing. This time the mood is gloomy, and with reason. Weak growth turns out to be the new normal, not part of the transition.

Influencers figures in 2015



SHINZŌ ABE
Prime Minister Of Japan
Shinzō Abe as Prime Minister of Japan developed an economic stimulus based on three arrows: 1) Quantitative easing, 2) Government spending and 3) Stimulus reforms. If his economic plan works it could improve Japan's economic growth as well as improve the world's economy.



JANET YELLEN
Chair Of The Board Of Governors Of The Federal Reserve System
Janet Yellen has recently decided to phase out the Federal Reserve's bond-buying stimulus and will be deciding when to raise short-term interest rates.



BARACK OBAMA
President Of The United States
U.S. role of leading the military campaign, albeit through air, has critical ability to weaken ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Also playing key role in coordination between Turkey and Saudi Arabia.



ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
Un High Commissioner For Refugees
Former Portuguese Prime Minister António Guterres will continue to play the key role in galvanising global financial and political support in addressing the chronic refugee crisis from Syria.



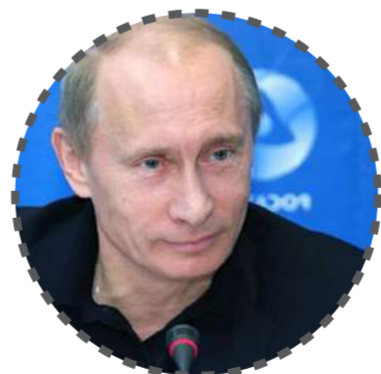
DILMA ROUSSEFF
President Of Brazil
Dilma Rousseff has recently won her second presidential mandate and is responsible for determining the economic policy of one of the biggest South American economies. After inheriting the \$225 billion Growth Acceleration Pact in 2010, Rousseff announced a new wave of investments in infrastructure in order for Brazil to be prepared both to the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games. Under Rousseff's government three major airports and six toll roads were privatised and more initiatives are expected from Rousseff to improve the Brazilian economy and boost its growth.



ANGELA MERKEL
Chancellor Of Germany
In power since 2005, Merkel has been a key voice in European politics. Germany has a substantial influence in Europe especially after the sovereign debt crisis when it played a key role in influencing the economic policies of many European countries (especially the ones which were subject to foreign economic intervention).



FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE
President Of France
Hollande is responsible for Europe's second largest economy. As President of France since 2012, Hollande, although facing unfavourable internal opinion polls, is a major economic and political driver in Europe.



VLADIMIR PUTIN
President Of Russia
Possibly the most powerful person in the world. Vladimir Putin is one of the holders of the keys to de-escalate the Ukraine crisis as he can decide to retreat from Crimea and also influence the decision of Gazprom to restore the gas supply to Ukraine.



GOODLUCK JONATHAN
President Of Nigeria
President of Nigeria since 2011, Jonathan will be seeking a second term in February 2015. He has had some political successes, more specifically a ceasefire with Islamist Boko Haram rebels, and has guided the country to be Ebola-free, as declared by the WHO.



GENERAL MARTIN DEMPSEY
Chairman Of The Joint Chiefs Of Staff, United States Army
General Dempsey is no stranger to the Iraqi armed forces, having led their development from 2005 to 2007. He now turns his attention back to Iraq as he coordinates their activities, along with coalition airstrikes, to halt the rise of ISIS without putting US troops on the ground.



NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister Of India
Modi has established a growth strategy for India which relies on fiscal consolidation and fuelling investments. Additionally, he is expected to take measures over job creation and take anti-corruption measures. Although his administration is less than a year old, India is now the fifth most requested country in terms of risk and opportunity reports from rating agencies and risk-mapping firms.



XI JINPING
President Of The People's Republic Of China
Xi is responsible for Chinese policies. He has been in power since 2013 and has accelerated the spending on infrastructure projects, supporting it with an expansionist monetary policy of injecting money into the banking system to improve credit supply and cut mortgage rates for some home buyers. Xi is also focused on internal issues and is now tackling some of the corruption in Chinese politics.